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The defects of this book have been thus fully dwelt upon, not because it is wholly bad, for there are many points worthy of the highest praise, but because the weak points are sufficiently numerous to seriously injure its value as a book of reference. Dr. Mill has attempted too much; and knowing the scope of the volume its weakness could have been predicted. Such a work could be produced satisfactorily only by a number of authors each writing upon his own specialty; but in this age of abundant and cheap text-books there is very little need of a book so general in range as this. If, however, one wishes to know a little of all the physical sciences, and is not able to procure a text-book upon each of the subjects he will find in this volume a fairly good substitute. The author shows a marked talent for lucid writing and as broad a knowledge as could be expected. He has tried to eliminate inaccuracies with much care; but in spite of all his efforts these have crept in as they must in all compilations of a physical science, unless done by specialists who alone are able to keep abreast of the times in a rapidly progressing science, carefully weigh the facts and properly present the progress of the science.

—*Ralph S. Tarr.*

AN ENGLISH GRAMMAR, adapted from "Essentials of English Grammar" by Professor W. D. Whitney. By Mrs. Sara E. H. Lockwood. Boston: Ginn & Co.

It has been a common criticism on Professor Whitney's "Essentials of English Grammar," that it was too difficult for school use. Appreciating this, Mrs. Lockwood with the author's permission has adapted the more elaborate book in order "to furnish a simple and practical text-book for pupils who are not of sufficient maturity to use with advantage the original work." The adaptation consists in simplifying the book by omitting considerable portions, as for instance chapters III and IV, by restatement in simpler language, and by adding numerous exercises for practice and illustration. Mrs. Lockwood has before this acquired a reputation by her excellent book "Lessons in English," so that she was well fitted to add those practical features so necessary to a successful text-book in America.

Apart from this Mrs. Lockwood has made few additions to the "Essentials." One or two that have been noticed may perhaps be somewhat criticised without doing injustice to the generally excellent character of the book. Under possessives we find this sentence: "Sometimes, however, we use both the preposition and the possessive form of the noun; for example, I will show you a picture of my brother's; He is a servant of the general's." There is here no suggestion that the form is a colloquialism, scarcely to be used by a careful writer of the present time. Another addition has been made under the heading of the present

tense. "The present tense is sometimes used with reference to what is past or future, when we wish to make it vivid and distinct." One of the examples given to exemplify this is, "He enters college next year." In fact, however, this last is only an example of a very old use of the present to signify future time, past action alone being put in the present tense for vividness. Such a mistake would not have been made if the author had possessed an historical knowledge of the language. The importance of the latter, both for the writer of a school grammar and for a teacher of the subject, can hardly be overestimated. But notwithstanding some points that might be improved, we very gladly testify to the excellent character of this new English Grammar.

—*Oliver Farrar Emerson.*

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The *Great Commanders Series*\* edited by General James Grant Wilson presents a most attractive announcement. Two volumes have thus far been issued, *Admiral Farragut* by Captain A. T. Mahan, U. S. A. and *General Taylor* by General O. O. Howard. The intrinsic interest of the subjects as well as the distinction of the authors leads us to expect much, and the expectation is fully realized. This effort to satisfy the general demand for a series of convenient, readable, popular but attractive biographies of illustrious American leaders on land and sea deserves success. The two volumes thus far issued would certainly be an addition to any school library. Indeed, it is hard to see how such a library can get along without them. The books are handsomely and durably bound, elegantly printed, and illustrated with a fine steel plate portrait of the subject of each as well as adequate maps.

In his *Handy Book of Literary Curiosities*\* Mr. Walsh frankly proclaims that his primary object is to entertain and even goes so far as to say that he had thought of entitling the book a "Dictionary of Things not Worth Knowing." Nevertheless it treats of things which most people wish to know, and there is withal a very considerable proportion of valuable as well as entertaining matter. The book is an extensive repository of out-of-the-way facts otherwise not easily accessible, if accessible at all, and for the teacher it cannot fail to be of much service. In a school reference library it would probably be frequently consulted and would have a distinctive value in connection with the work in English composition especially. It furnishes a store-house of materials for such work. A special feature of the book is its quite complete collection of Americanisms.

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\*See Books Received.